

What is claimed is:

1. A chat system comprising:

5 a plurality of terminal devices forming a network, said terminal devices being adapted to transmit and receive messages to and from each other through any of a plurality of virtual communication spaces configured on the network, the messages transmitted and received being displayed on display means of each terminal device together with message sender identifying information of persons
10 who send the messages; and

table means for storing therein identifiers and corresponding character-train information of persons using said virtual communications spaces;

15 said character trains are used as said message sender identifying information.

2. The chat system according to Claim 1 wherein said table means contains different character-train information for the identifier of a same one person for use in different ones of said
20 virtual communications spaces.

3. The chat system according to Claim 1 wherein said table means contains different character-train information for the identifier of a same person for use in communications with different
25 persons.

4. The chat system according to Claim 1 wherein said terminal devices use said table means in common.

30 5. The chat system according to Claim 1 wherein the character-train information stored in said table means is accessible from said respective terminal devices.

35 6. The chat system according to Claim 1 wherein character-train information to be stored in said table means is set through terminal devices from which said messages are transmitted.

11. The chat system according to Claim 9 wherein said sender identifiers with messages are transmitted with receivers of said messages designated; said table has stored therein said identifiers and corresponding character-train information for
5 respective message receivers; and said search means searches for the character-train information corresponding to the message sender and the message receiver.

12. A chat system comprising:
10 a server;
a plurality of terminal devices forming a network with said server, said terminal devices being adapted to transmit and receive messages to and from each other through any of a plurality of virtual communication spaces configured on the network, the
15 messages transmitted and received being displayed on display means of each terminal device together with message sender identifying information of persons who send the messages;
a table disposed in each of said terminal devices for storing therein identifiers and corresponding character-train information of
20 persons using said terminal devices; and
search means disposed in each of said terminal devices for searching said table for character-train information corresponding to the identifier of a message sender when the terminal device receives said identifier and a message from said message sender,
25 so that the character-train information is displayed together with the received message on said display means of said terminal device.

13. A chat system comprising:
a server;
30 a plurality of terminal devices forming a network with said server, said terminal devices being adapted to transmit and receive messages to and from each other through any of a plurality of virtual communication spaces configured on the network, the messages transmitted and received being displayed on display
35 means of each terminal device together with message sender identifying information of persons who send the messages;
a table disposed in each of said terminal devices for storing

00004515-0340304

therein identifiers and corresponding character-train information of persons using said terminal devices; and

search means disposed in each of said terminal devices for searching said table for character-train information corresponding to the identifier of a message sender when the terminal device transmits said identifier so that the character-train information is transmitted together with the message.

14. The chat system according to Claim 12 wherein said sender identifier and message are transmitted through a designated one of said virtual communication spaces;

said table has stored therein different character-train information for the respective ones of said identifiers for use in different ones of said virtual communication spaces; and

said search means searches said table for the character-train corresponding to the designated virtual communication space and sender identifier.

15. The chat system according to Claim 13 wherein said sender identifier and message are transmitted through a designated one of said virtual communication spaces;

said table has stored therein different character-train information for the respective ones of said identifiers for use in different ones of said virtual communication spaces; and

said search means searches said table for the character-train corresponding to the designated virtual communication space and identifier.

16. The chat system according to Claim 12 wherein said sender identifiers with messages are transmitted with receivers of said messages designated; said table has stored therein said identifiers and corresponding character-train information for respective message receivers; and said search means searches for the character-train information corresponding to the message sender and the message receiver.

17. The chat system according to Claim 13 wherein said

sender identifiers with messages are transmitted with receivers of said messages designated; said table has stored therein said identifiers and corresponding character-train information for respective message receivers; and said search means searches for
5 the character-train information corresponding to the message sender and the message receiver.

~~18.~~ A record medium for use in terminal device of a chat system, wherein a plurality of terminal devices form with a server a
10 network, said terminal devices being adapted to transmit and receive messages to and from each other through any of a plurality of virtual communication spaces configured on the network, the messages transmitted and received being displayed on display means of each terminal device together with message sender
15 identifying information of persons who send the messages;

said record medium being readable in each of said terminal devices;

said record medium including:

table means for storing therein identifiers of persons who use
20 the chat system and corresponding character-train information; and

search means for searching said table means for character-train information corresponding to the identifier of a person who is going to send a message and outputting the character-train information sought, as said message sender identifying information,
25 for transmission with said message.

19. The record medium according to Claim 18 wherein said identifier and a message of a message sender are transmitted through a designated one of said virtual communication spaces;

30 said table means has stored therein different character-train information for the respective ones of said identifiers for use in different ones of said virtual communication spaces; and

said search means searches said table for the character-train corresponding to the designated virtual communication space and
35 the identifier of said message sender.

20. The record medium according to Claim 18 wherein the

identifier and a message of a message sender are transmitted with receivers of said message designated; said table means has stored therein said identifiers and character-train information corresponding to said identifiers to be used in relation to respective message receivers; and said search means searches for the character-train information corresponding to the message sender and the message receiver.

21. A record medium for use in a terminal device of a chat system, wherein a plurality of terminal devices form a network, said terminal devices being adapted to transmit and receive messages to and from each other through any of a plurality of virtual communication spaces configured on the network, the messages transmitted and received being displayed on display means of each terminal device together with message sender identifying information of persons who send the messages;

said record medium being readable in each of said terminal devices;

said record medium including:

table means for storing therein identifiers of persons who use the chat system and corresponding character-train information; and

search means for searching said table means for character-train information corresponding to the identifier of the message sender received through the virtual communication spaces and outputting the character-train information, as said message sender identifying information, for display on said display means.

22. The record medium according to Claim 21 wherein said identifier and a message of a message sender are transmitted through a designated one of said virtual communication spaces;

said table means has stored therein different character-train information for said identifiers for use in different ones of said virtual communication spaces; and

said search means searches said table for the character-train corresponding to the designated virtual communication space and the identifier of said message sender.

23. The record medium according to Claim 21 wherein the identifier and a message of a message sender are transmitted with receivers of said message designated; said table means has stored therein said identifiers and character-train information corresponding to said identifiers to be used in relation to respective message receivers; and said search means searches for the character-train information corresponding to the message sender and the message receiver.

24. A record medium for use in a server of a chat system, wherein said server forms a network with a plurality of terminal devices, said server being adapted to allow said plurality of terminal devices to transmit and receive messages to and from each other through any of a plurality of virtual communication spaces configured on the network, the messages transmitted and received being displayed on display means of each terminal device together with message sender identifying information of persons who send the messages;

said record medium being readable in said server;

said record medium including:

table means for storing therein identifiers of persons who use the chat system and character-train information corresponding to said identifiers; and

converting means for searching said table means for character-train information corresponding to the identifier of the message sender sent together with a message by any of said terminal devices and outputting the character-train information for sending it together with said message to a given virtual communication space.

25. The record medium according to Claim 24 wherein said identifier and a message of a message sender are transmitted through a designated one of said virtual communication spaces;

said table means has stored therein different character-train information for said identifiers for use in different ones of said virtual communication spaces; and

said search means searches said table for the character-train

corresponding to the designated virtual communication space and the identifier of said message sender.

26. The record medium according to Claim 24 wherein the
5 identifier and a message of a message sender are transmitted with
receivers of said message designated; said table means has stored
therein said identifiers and character-train information
corresponding to said identifiers to be used in relation to respective
message receivers; and said search means searches for the
10 character-train information corresponding to the message sender
and the message receiver.

27. A chat system comprising:
a plurality of terminal devices forming a network, said terminal
15 devices being adapted to transmit and receive messages to and
from each other through any of a plurality of virtual communication
spaces configured on the network, the messages transmitted and
received being displayed on display means of each terminal device
together with message sender identifying information of persons
20 who sends the messages;
a memory having stored therein messages in association with
identifiers of persons using said terminal devices; and
converting means for converting a designated one of said
identifiers stored in said memory to a predetermined character train
25 and causing said display means to display the character train.

28. The chat system according to Claim 27 wherein said
network comprises a plurality of terminal devices and one server,
and said memory is provided in said server.

30

29. The chat system according to Claim 27 wherein said
memory is provided in each of said terminal devices.

30. The chat system according to Claim 29 wherein said
35 converting means is provided in each of said terminal devices.